



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our work in November 2022

Monthly approaches overview

1 November 2022 to 30 November 2022



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Please note: our data is subject to change due to ongoing investigations and quality assurance activities. If you have a question about our data, please contact us on 1300 795 265 or by email via complaints@nhpo.gov.au.

182

approaches
received



Down from 479 in
November 2021



54

Ombudsman
complaints received



Down from 321 in
November 2021



2

FOI matters
received



Consistent with 2 in
November 2021



1

privacy
complaint received



Consistent with 1 in
November 2021



125

enquiries
received



Down from 153
in November 2021



Ombudsman complaints
were made by 48
individuals (down from
310 in November 2021)



0

FOI review
decisions
published



0

notifiable data
breaches
assessed (2 in
November 2021)

Complaints to the Ombudsman

15

early resolution
transfers made



Up from 8 in
November 2021



6

preliminary
inquiries made



Down from 14 in
November 2021



0

investigations
launched



Down from 3 in
November 2021



63

Ombudsman
complaints finalised



Down from 320 in November 2021

Stage complaint was finalised

38

assessment

17

early resolution
transfer

5

preliminary
inquiry

3

investigation

Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2022 to 30 November 2022



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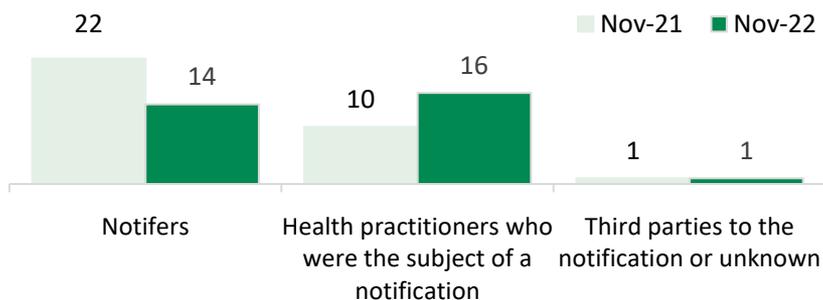
31

notification-related
complaints received

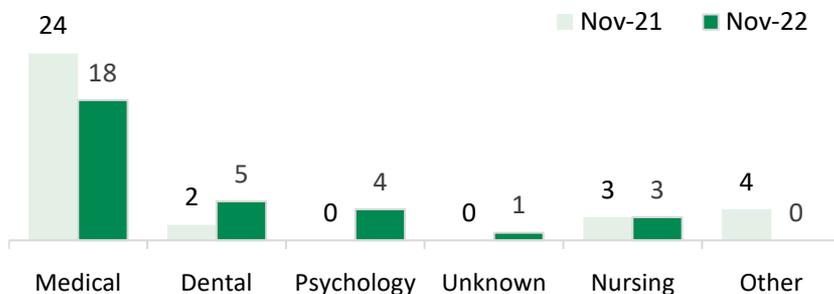


Down from 33 in November 2021

Who made notification-related complaints



Professions notification-related complaints were about



Type of notifications action taken by Ahpra or a Board that most frequently drove notification-related complaints

1. Active notification
2. No further action taken at the assessment stage
3. Action taken following an investigation
4. Immediate action taken
5. No further action at investigation stage

Stage notification-related complaints were finalised

20 assessment 9 early resolution transfer
4 preliminary inquiry 3 investigation

Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. Investigation declined because the notification was active with Ahpra and a Board
3. Ahpra's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
4. Matter would be more appropriately handled by Court or Tribunal
5. Investigation declined because the complaint was about the merits of a Board's decision

Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2022 to 30 November 2022



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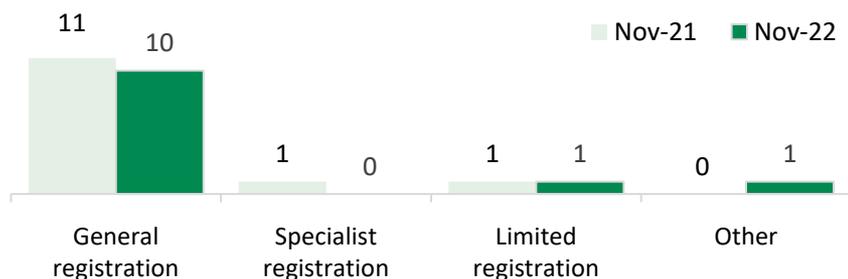
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registration-related
complaints received

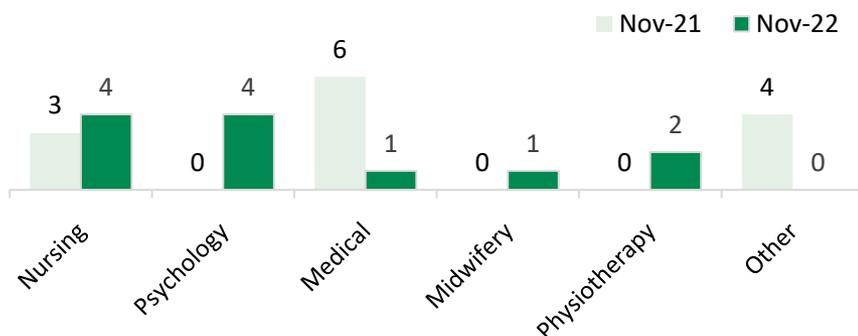


Down from 13 November 2021

Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



Professions registration-related complaints were about



Registration processes that most frequently drove registration-related complaints

1. Assessment of an international qualification
2. Transitioning from one registration type to another
3. Application of the Criminal History Registration Standard
4. Application of Recency of Practice Registration Standard
5. Processing a new application for registration

Stage registration-related complaints were finalised



Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. Ahpra's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
2. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. Investigation declined because the matter was active with Ahpra and a Board
4. Complaint concerns a decision made by a Court or Tribunal
5. Complaint is currently active with Ahpra's National Complaints Team



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Our year to date

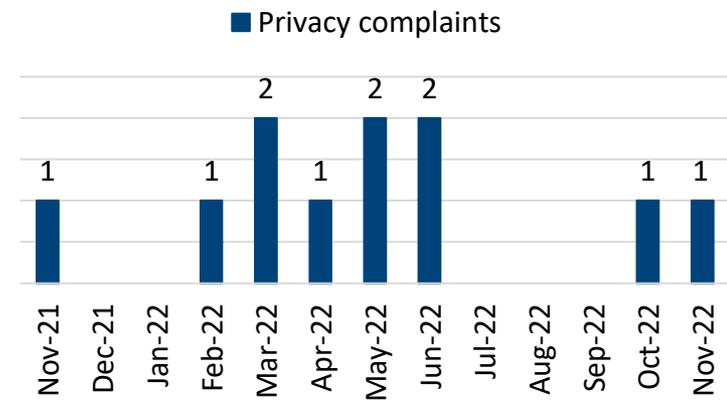
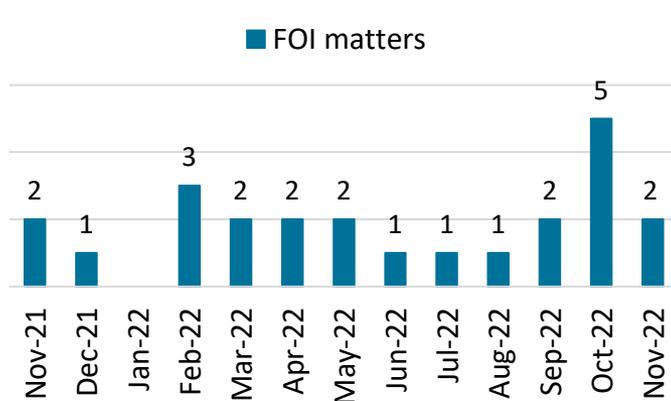
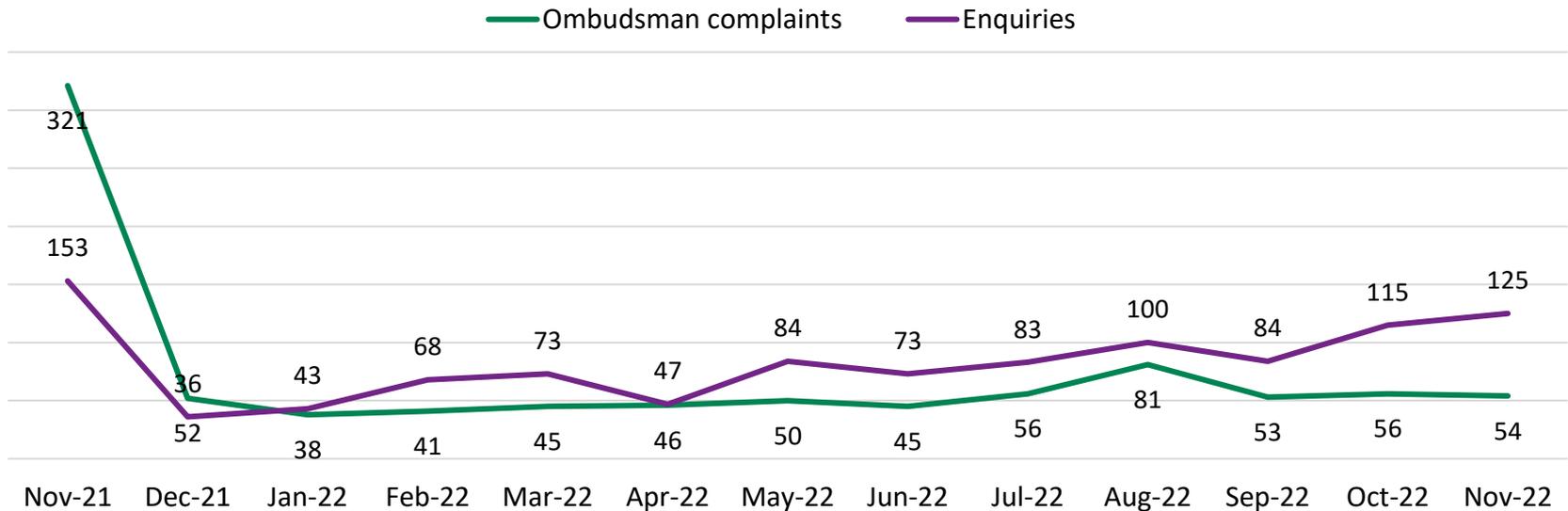
1 July 2022 to November 2022

Approach trends

1 November 2021 to 30 November 2022



National Health
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Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2022 to 30 November 2022

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Types of complaints received

194 ↑ notification
Up from 131 in the same period last financial year

70 ↑ registration
Up from 57 in the same period last financial year

9 Pandemic policy/ response
27 Other types

Who made complaints

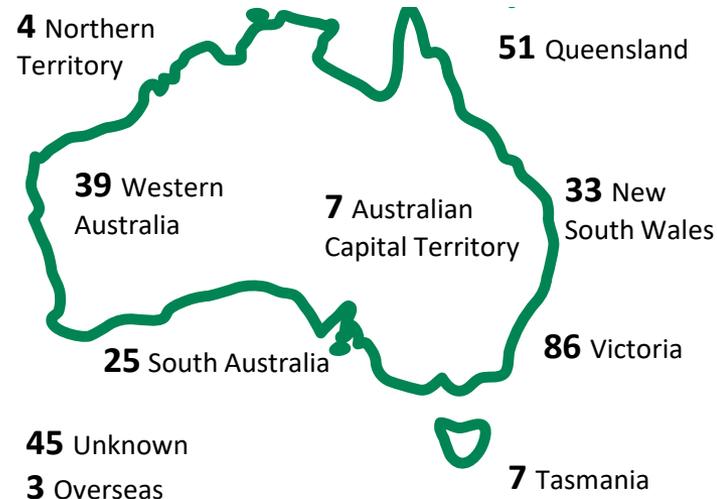
154 health practitioners
146 Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 122 in the same period last financial year
↓ Down from 384 in the same period last financial year

Professions most complaints were about

170 medical (Down from 389 in the same period last financial year)
38 Nursing (Up from 35 in the same period last financial year)
32 psychology (Up from 22 in the same period last financial year)

Location the complaints were made from



Most common notification-related issues that drove complaints

1. Notifier believes the decision to take no further action at the assessment stage is unfair or unreasonable
2. Notifier believes an active notification has been unreasonably delayed
3. Practitioner believes an active notification has been unreasonably delayed

Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the English Language Skills Registration Standard has been applied unfairly
2. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the assessment of an international qualification has been unreasonably delayed
3. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the assessment of an international qualification is unfair or unreasonable

Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2022 to 30 November 2022

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Early resolution mechanisms

195 

complaints
finalised at the
assessment stage

Down from
402 in the
same period
last financial
year



48 

complaints finalised
at the preliminary
inquiry stage

Up from 40
in the same
period last
financial year



65 

complaints finalised
at the early resolution
transfer stage

Up from 48
in the same
period last
financial year



Most common outcomes at early resolution stages (assessment, preliminary inquiry and early resolution transfer)

1. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. Ahpra's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. Matter was active with Ahpra and a Board
4. Complainant did not provide requested information
5. Complainant was not directly impacted by the complaint issue

Investigations

11 

complaints
finalised at the
investigation stage



Down from 50 in the same
period last financial year

Most common investigation outcomes

1. We provided feedback to Ahpra
2. We provided a further explanation to the complainant
3. Ahpra provided an apology or acknowledgement to the complainant
4. We provided positive feedback to Ahpra
5. Ahpra agreed to assess new material provided by the complainant

Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

November 2022 was one of my office's busiest months in terms of the number of approaches we received (equal with August 2022). However, the level of approaches did not reach the same peak that we saw in November 2021 when my office received a surge in pandemic-related complaints through our web form.

My office received 182 approaches during the month, 121 of which concerned matters that were outside of our jurisdiction. These matters mostly related to concerns about the conduct or performance of registered health practitioners (44 per cent). We generally provided information to these enquirers about how to contact Ahpra, the Office of the Health Ombudsman (QLD) or the Health Care Complaints Commission (NSW) to progress their concerns.

In November 2022, complaints about notifications and registration matters were both less common than they were in November 2021. However, notification-related complaints account for 48 per cent more complaints so far this financial year compared with the same period of the preceding year. Interestingly, the nature of these complaints appears to have changed. Notification-related complaints are now more likely to be brought to my office by health practitioners compared with the same time last year.

My office saw an increase in accreditation-related complaints in November 2022, which highlights the value of the accreditation complaint handling function my office is preparing to receive soon. My team looks forward to working closely with specialist medical colleges and other accreditation organisations to bring about the timely, fair and reasonable resolution of complaints.

My office continues to prioritise early resolution of complaints wherever possible. We finalised 95 per cent of all Ombudsman complaints this month using early resolution mechanisms such as assessment, transfer to Ahpra's complaints team or preliminary inquiries. Through prioritising the early resolution of complaints, we have reduced the number of investigations commenced between July and November 2022 by 77 per cent when compared with the same period in 2021.